

Central American NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Central American Group of the Spanish Main Society.

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EDITORIAL

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all, and your families, every good wish for the Christmas season, and the New Year. I always look forward to the Christmas holidays since it is the time I can really get to my stamps - it's too cold to go into the garden, and all the DIY shops are shut!

Saturday 25 February is the next date for your diary. A joint meeting of the CA and Chile groups is planned for the Victory Services Club, and Dr Richard Saundry would like to hear from anyone who would like to display. His address is:-

Gwrych Cottage, Godstone Road, Bletchingley, Redhill, Surrey RH1 4PL.

We look forward to a varied and well supported meeting.

At the AGM on Saturday 10 December, the Spanish Main Cup was awarded jointly to Frank Pegley for his early issues of Chile, and Richard Saundry for his Costa Rican Railway material. In third place was Colin Eddleston with his Peruvian postal stationery. Congratulations to them all. Your editor sank without trace!

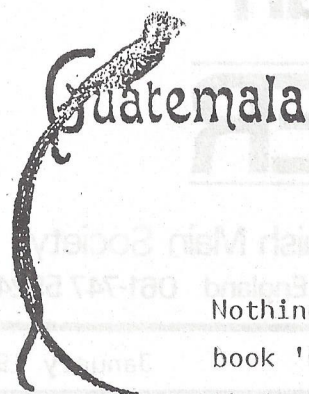
This issue has, because of its variety of content, given me great pleasure to put together. I hope we will continue to maintain this balance in the future, and I look forward to continuing the stimulating correspondence I have become accustomed to.

Mike Birks

SPANISH MAIN Annual subscription £5 (UK), £6 (Europe), \$15 (elsewhere)
The subscription includes four copies of Mainsheet, and also private treaty lists and auction catalogues.

Secretary: Brian Moorhouse, PO Box 105, PETERBOROUGH PE3 8TQ, England.

The society also runs two specialised groups, the Central American and the Chile groups. The subscription to each group is £3 (UK) or \$7 elsewhere, to Spanish Main members, or \$10 to non-members (Overseas subscriptions only). This includes four copies of the respective Newsletter, by airmail.



BOGUS, FAKED AND DUBIOUS CANCELLATIONS ON 19TH CENTURY STAMPS

by MARK SPYCHER

Nothing has been written on this subject for a long time. The hand-book 'GUATEMALA I' has a good write-up on the large numeral cancels, their fakes and that's about the lot.

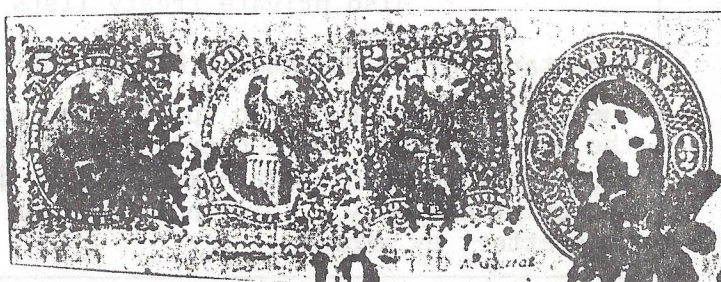
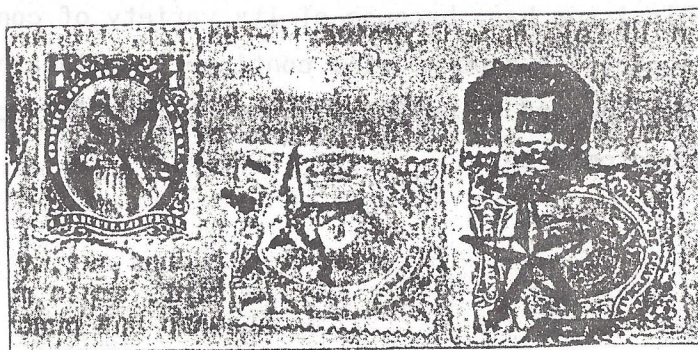
Having acquired in recent times some of these goodies I think the time is ripe to put pen to paper and let other collectors know what they should look out for.

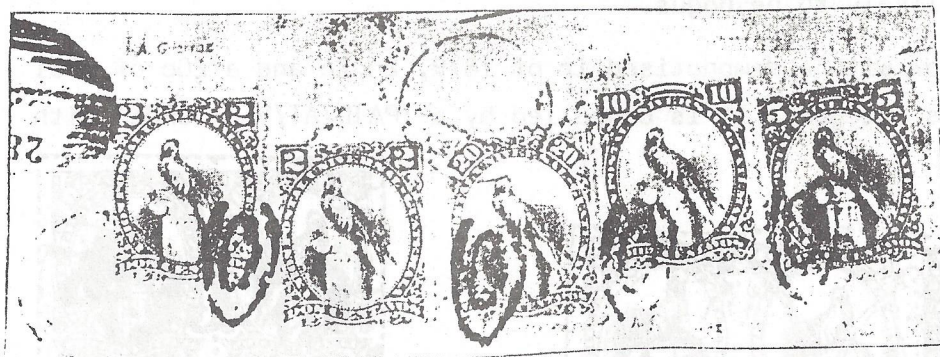
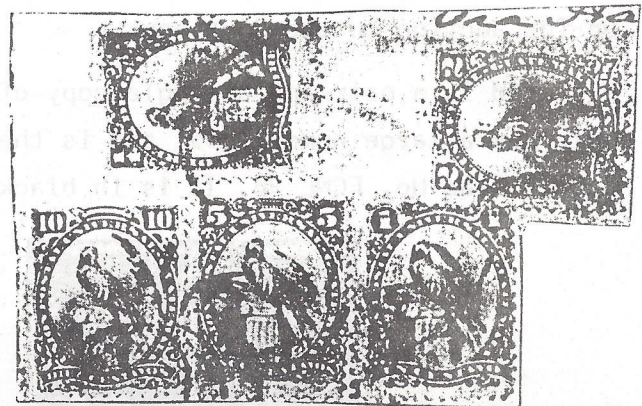
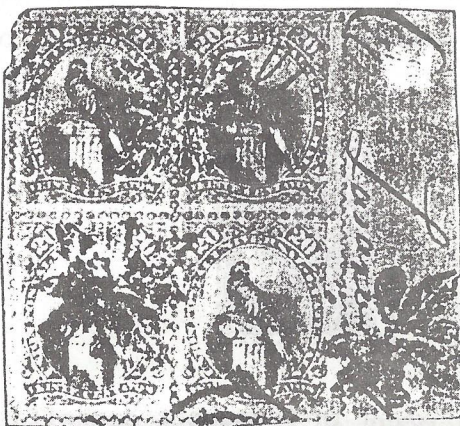
Auction catalogues too provide a fertile field for hunting as from time to time items are offered which are not what they should be. Dealers' stocks are also a useful source of supply if one wishes to specialise in this type of material.

An attractive collection can be formed especially if the stamps are on fragments (or even covers) but I must say this requires a great deal of searching. Fancy type cancellations are not common.

Bogus Fancy Cancellations

Pictured here is a gorgeous and most colourful selection on fragments with many impossible franking combinations. Many years ago these were offered in a Central American Society auction and fetched rather steep prices ranging from \$8.50 to \$70.00 a piece





Most of these cancellations are in black, some in violet. All the fragments are stamped 'A Guerrez' as owner. He was a very early member of the ISGC. On the back of each is the signature of 'Darteyre' who was a well-known dealer and expert on American postmarks, and had offices at No.64 Rue Lafayette, Paris IX. His full name was Didier Darteyre and he came to Paris from Belgium in the early forties. He published an annual 'Etudes et Annales de la Timborologie', the first to the fourth editions in Brussels and the subsequent ones in Paris. In 1942 an article by him appeared in the aforementioned publication on US fancy cancellations with illustrations of 88 different wheel and star patterns. Since he signed all the fragments shown above his claim to be an expert must be seriously questioned at least as far as Guatemala is concerned.

The suggestion has been offered that these bogus strikes were the work of Zareski, author of a book on 19th century US cancellations and who was known to have forged some of these. He too lived in Paris. Can anybody throw further light on Zareski? Another prolific forger was Raoul Charles deThuin who for many years sold his nefarious products from Merida in Mexico. Could he be the perpetrator of these fancy cancellations?

Bogus and forged Cancellations

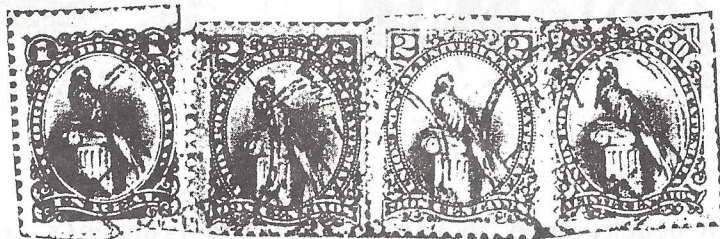
These have been seen over the past couple of years when a famous collection came up for auction on the Continent.

Pictured is a pair and a single copy of the 1881 2c with inverted centre. The pair has a large numeral '9' and is the forgery mentioned in 'Guatemala I' on page 241 as No. FCNL 9B. It is in black.



The single has a 'PAQUEBOT' strike in black not found in 'Paquebot cancellations of the World', second edition by Roger Hosking. Paquebot marks were not introduced until 1894 so this is likely to be bogus.

The fragment shown below with a demonetised 1r of 1879, 2 x 2c and a 20c of 1881 equally falls into this category. It is cancelled by a 'PAID/AT/VERA CRUZ' with crowned circle!!!



The block of 4 x 20c of 1881 with an indistinctive single circle and straight-line 'GUATEMALA' looks attractive enough as a showpiece but should not fool the seasoned collector. Also in black.

Finally the two stamps with 'Skull and Crossbone' strikes are in the writer's opinion bogus (or may have been applied in the US from genuine obliterations).



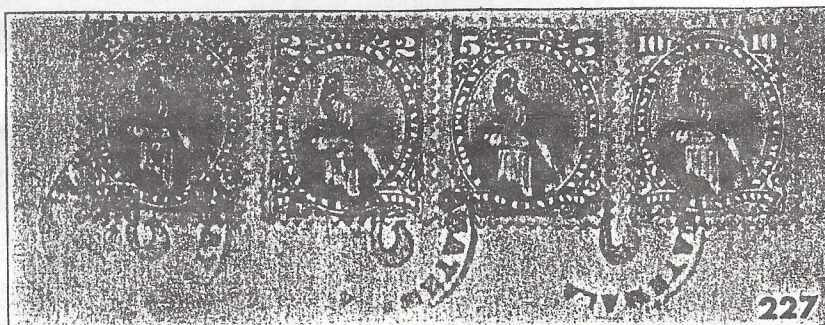
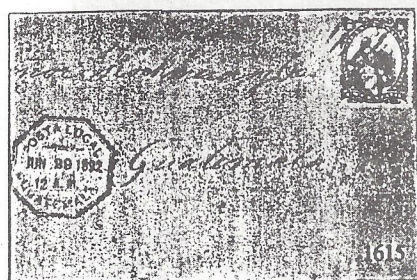
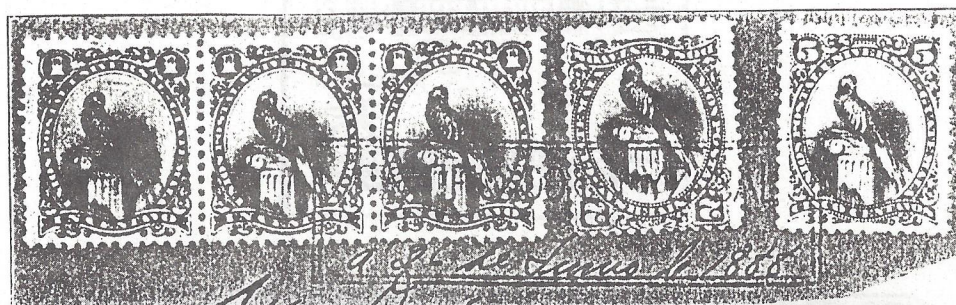
Other Dubious Postmarks on and off Covers on the 1881 Issue

Here we are dealing with genuine cancellations applied to stamps on and off covers some time after these were demonetised on July 1, 1886.

This pair of 20c has two small numeral '11' strikes of Salamá, probably in black. This postmark was introduced in the late 1880's so cannot have genuinely been used on the 1881 issue, and covers are not known to exist.



Last but not least we now show three covers (or part thereof).



The first one with an impossible franking (and with a 2c inverted centre thrown in for good measure) shows the 'CERTIFICADO YZABAL' and a date in m/s of 26 June 1888. Highly philatelic of course.

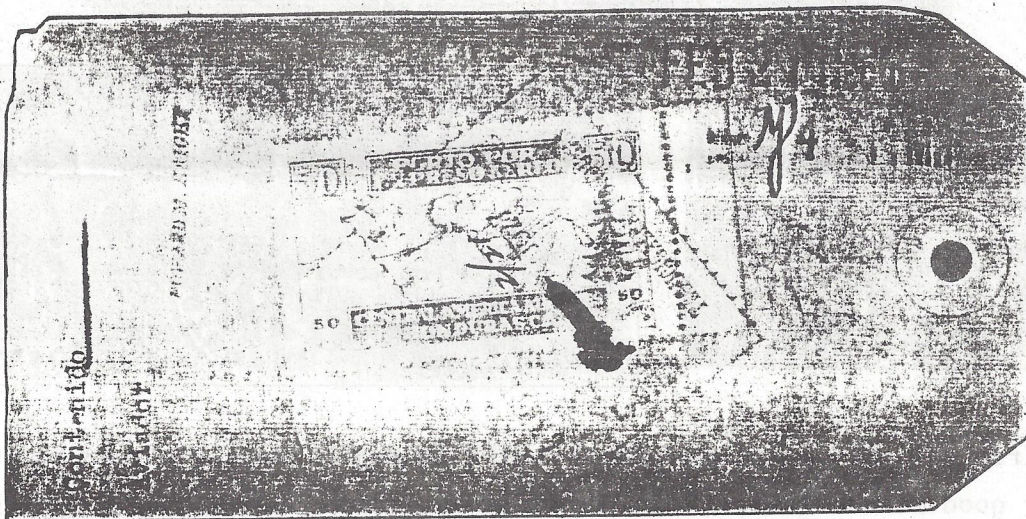
The second cover is a local one of Guatemala City showing the local 1c rate, postmarked 29 June 1892, six years after demonetisation. It is of course possible that the obliterator was wrongly manipulated and the year date should have been 1882.

The last one is a real beauty, apparently registered and with an impossible franking. The circled '2' (in violet) of Guatemala City (also known to have been used in Retalhuleu) was introduced about the middle of the 1890's. Another purely philatelic production.

Collectors with other bogus and forged material may care to send photocopies and, if necessary, descriptions to the author via the editor. The more knowledge we can gain the better for collectors of Guatemala.

THE SEMI-OFFICIAL AIR MAIL STAMPS OF HONDURAS

Our request for information regarding the Honduran cinderella item shown to us by Roger Allen has elicited two responses. First Richard Washburn of Rhode Island sends us a page from his collection, headed "1927, Central American Airlines, 'Porto Por Expreso Aereo'. Dr T C Pounds, an American, pioneered local air mail and freight services in Honduras. These special stamps were used on baggage tags. This February 21 tag Tegucigalpa to Yuscarán shows the name of Edward M Haight as pilot".



Central American Lines

EXPRESO AEREO

De *Juanita Cristina Escobar H.*

A *Yuscaran, Honduras.*

Valor *1.00* Peso *1.00*

Richard adds that the item is known perforated and imperforate, blue on light blue paper and blue on red paper, printed in sheets of four.

Secondly, Bill Welch, editor of the American Philatelist, wrote enclosing photostats of three articles written on the subject, and which appeared in the American Philatelist. I have forwarded these to Roger Allen, and give their references below for anyone interested in reading around this subject.

The Alleged First Air-Mail Stamps of Honduras, by John N Myer APS,
August 1940, pp 704-707.

Alleged Semi-Official Air Mail Stamps of Honduras, by John N Myer APS,
January 1942, p 249.

The Second Air Mail Service in Honduras, by John N Myer APS,
July 1942, pp 666-668

The first of these articles contains an announcement concerning the air mail service.

"AIR SERVICE

The correspondence which will be carried from this city to the North Coast by airplane will bear two stamps: the ordinary postage of the Government, according to the current tariff, and the postage of the special stamp of the enterpriser, according to the following.

TARIFF

Letters, post cards and business papers, for each 20 grams or fraction	\$0.25
Periodicals, for each 20 grams or fraction	0.20
Parcels, from 1 to 100 grams: for each 20 or fraction	0.25
From 100 to 250 grams	1.25
For the excess of each 20 grams or fraction over 250	0.15
Registration, per piece	0.10

The special stamps will be sold by Dr T.C Pounds in this city, and his Agents in the other places where correspondence is to be carried by air. The plane will leave this Capital on Wednesdays and Fridays of each week; and for the present will land only at Puerto Cortés. Those interested will deposit correspondence in the Main Post-Office until 4 p.m. of the day before departure. After this, the enterpriser will receive correspondence for transportation, provided that it bears the stamp of the Government.

Napoléon Paz Paredes
Postmaster General

Tegucigalpa, April 29, 1925."

The first flight landed at Puerto Cortés on 30th April, and was followed by a further eight trips in May and June, when the service was suspended owing to damage sustained by the aircraft. A further seven flights took place during October and November, and in the same period six trips from Puerto Cortés to Tegucigalpa. The aircraft sustained further damage in November 1925 during a tourist flight to Danlí, ending the service.

Myer reports the colours of the stamps as being violet on blue and carmine on blue.

WHAT'S A CORDOBA WORTH? by MICHAEL P BIRKS

Shortly after the introduction of the Gold Cordoba into Nicaragua, Francis Tyrer, working in Libertad Chontales, wrote to his sister in England. The cover is illustrated as figure 1, and is cancelled with the cds of Juigalpa, described by Kilian Nathan in an earlier article as RRR!

LIBERTAD CHONTALES
NICARAGUA, C.A.
April 22/13

Mr dear Ada,

I last wrote you 15^{mch}. I now write again as this will go to Juigalpa by hand to get posted there, and it may be 4 or 6 weeks before the local mail starts up again. The men have gone on strike, as they have had no wages as Government employees for 8 months, they have had to borrow money to pay for the vitals. I don't blame them, all the authorities have been changed, the Govr. of Sto. Domingo is from Granada, he looks a bad egg, had better look out, as there are some rough ones in Sto. Domingo.

Babylonia have had a flare up, and armed men broke into store house taking away 4 dynamite candles, cloth etc. - they had 4 soldiers to protect mine but the thieves fired on them and the escorts flew away.

I enclose some cotten and chilie seeds, thought it might amuse you or some of your friends, to plant same and report progress. Well dear this d—— political movement plays the deuce all round. I only have 8 men all told, all t'others having cleared, not to be recruited it makes one sick with the country at large, and makes capitalists scared to invest, however as I told you, I fancy I will be able to close a deal and realize. I am sick and tired of it all, and want to get a well deserved rest.

I can see serious trouble with the new monetary issue, they leave goods same old price, and want Cordobas to run at gold currency rate, 1 peso \$1.00 Gold = to 8c cordoba. The labour want cordobas for pesos and men that were earning \$6.50 kick at 50c cordoba in lieu. Trusting this will find you well with best love. Ever your affectionate brother. Write often and send Spanish papers.

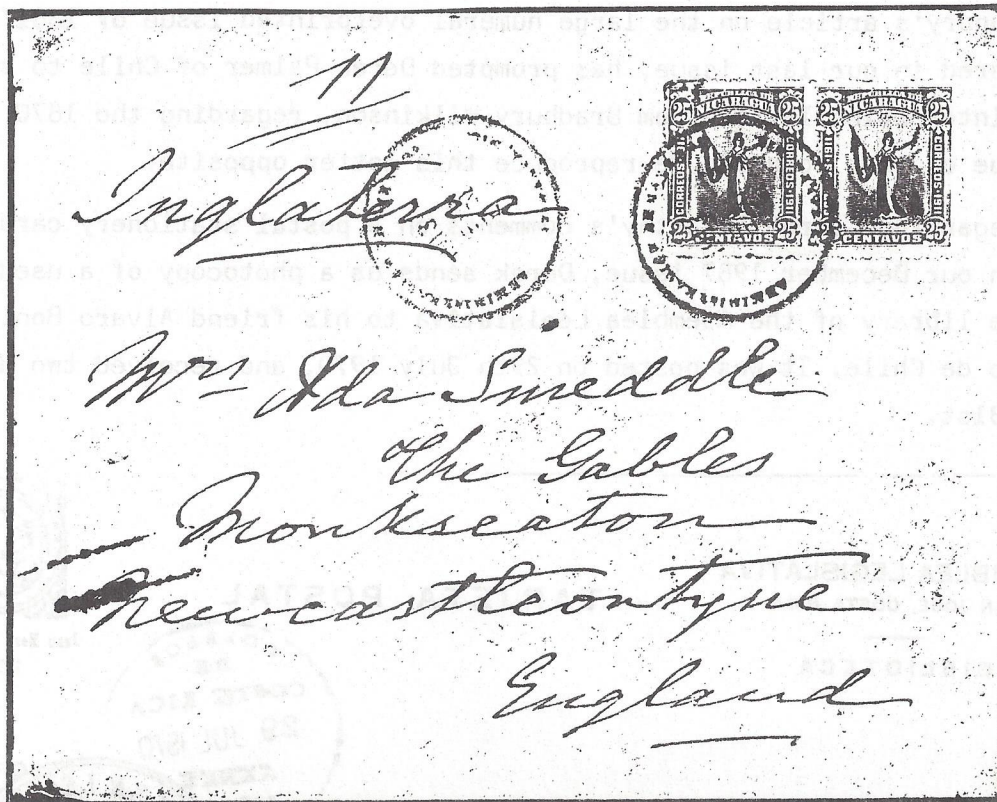
Francis Tyrer

So 1 peso = 8c (of a cordoba), or 1 cordoba = $12\frac{1}{2}$ pesos.

The inflation which led to the revision of the currency had not ended by this time. Indeed the old foreign rate of 50c (of a peso) had been upped to 5c (of a cordoba), not 4c the real equivalent.

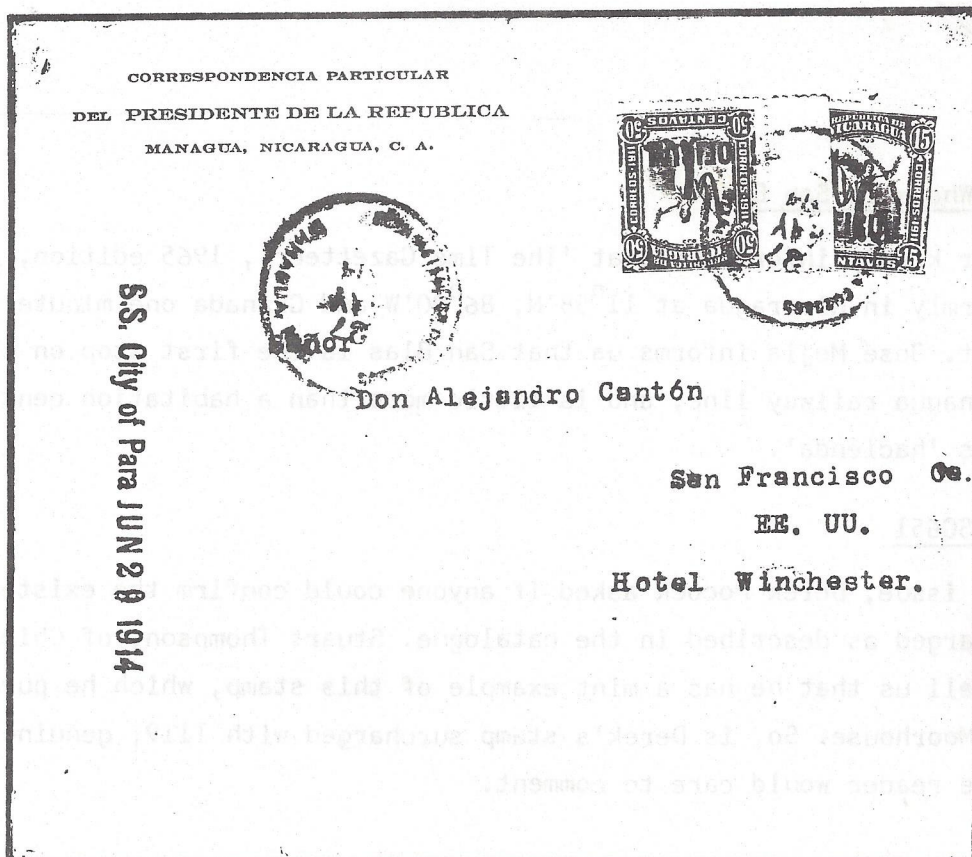
The official cover, figure 2, sent by the President of the Republic to the United States in May 1914, is franked with 65c of 'peso' adhesives to prepay the new 5c rate. This equates to 5.2c which is quite close.

(The right hand stamp is partially obscured by the selvedge of the left hand stamp).



↑ Figure 1 (slightly reduced)

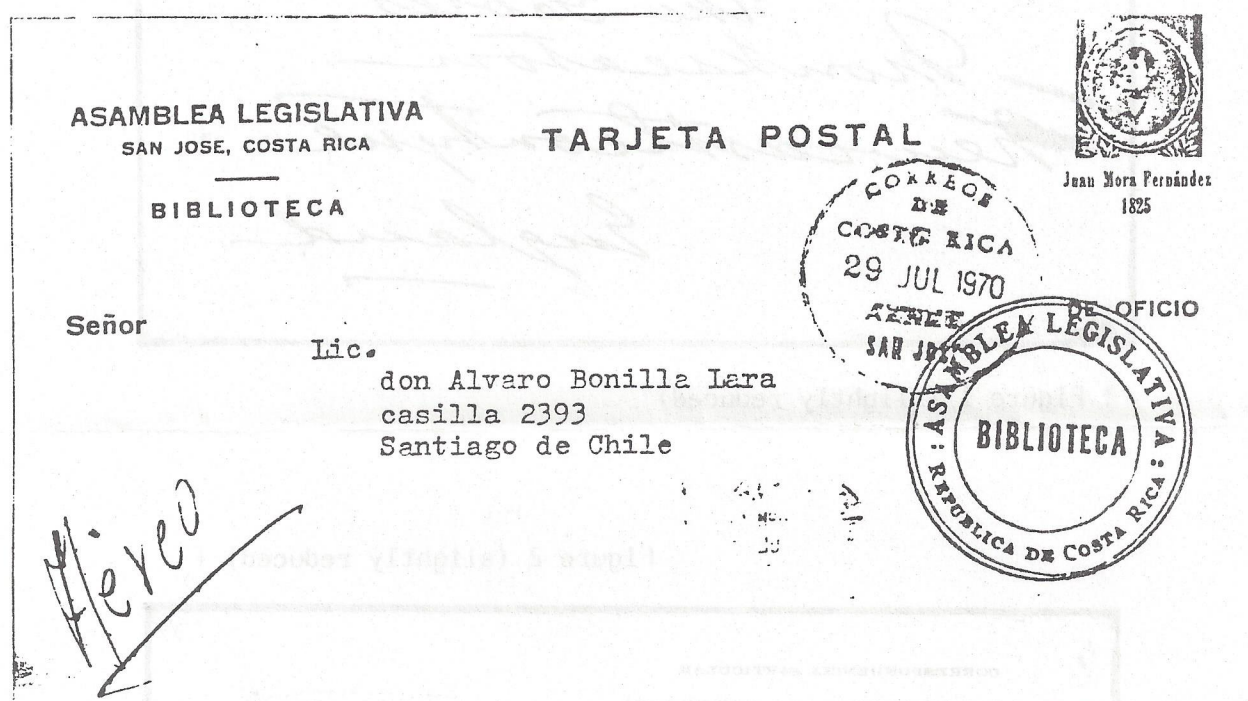
Figure 2 (slightly reduced) ↓



COSTA RICA

Richard Saundry's article on the large numeral overprinted issue of 1881/2, which appeared in our last issue, has prompted Derek Palmer of Chile to send us a most interesting letter from Bradbury Wilkinson, regarding the 1870 Fiscal Issue of that country. We reproduce this letter opposite.

Further, regarding George McCarthy's comments on a postal stationery card, which appeared in our December 1987 issue, Derek sends us a photocopy of a used card sent by the library of the Asamblea Legislativa to his friend Alvaro Bonilla-Lara in Santiago de Chile. It was posted on 29th July 1970, and received two days later, on 31st.



NICARAGUA - Where is San Blas?

Derek Palmer kindly informs us that 'The Time Gazetteer', 1965 edition, places San Blas firmly in Nicaragua at 11°58'N, 86°00'W and Granada one minute to the east of that. José Mejia informs us that San Blas is the first stop on the Granada - Managua railway line, and is little more than a habitation centre for the San Blas 'hacienda'.

NICARAGUA - SG651

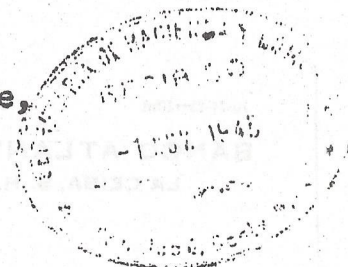
In our last issue, Derek Pocock asked if anyone could confirm the existence of SG651 surcharged as described in the catalogue. Stuart Thompson, of Chichester, writes to tell us that he has a mint example of this stamp, which he purchased from Brian Moorhouse. So, is Derek's stamp surcharged with T119, genuine or bogus? Perhaps some reader would care to comment.

BRADBURY, WILKINSON & COMPANY,
LIMITED.

NEW MALDEN. 26th October, 1945.
SURREY.



Secretary of Finance,
Secretariat of Finance and Commerce,
SAN JOSE,
Costa Rica.



Dear Sir,

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th September No. 5919 in which you ask for information from us with regard to some Fiscal Stamps which we printed for your Government in the year 1870.

We very much regret but we are afraid that we can give you very little information with regard to these stamps because when we moved our factory from London to New Malden in the year 1921 a great many of our old records were destroyed. According to our books we only received one order for these stamps from your Government which was in May 1870 and the quantities which were printed at that time were

200,000 stamps each of 5, 10, 25, 50 centavos
and \$1 & \$2
150,000 stamps each of \$2½ & \$5
100,000 stamps each of \$10 & \$25
1,000 stamps each of \$50 & \$100

These stamps were printed in colour with the value in black but we are sorry to say that we have no specimens of them in our possession. Our records show that in accordance with the request of William Le Lacheur & Sons of 58 Lombard Street, London, in 1922 the engravings from which these stamps were printed were destroyed. We have been in communication with your Consul in London, Mr. J. C. Eggars, in the hope that some impressions of these stamps were in his files but he informs us that he has nothing and that furthermore the old files of Le Lacheur & Sons are not in his possession, nor does he know where they are.

We are indeed sorry that we cannot be of more help to you in this matter.

In the last paragraph of your letter you speak of a competition which is being opened by your Government for the printing of a stamp, but the details of this were not enclosed.

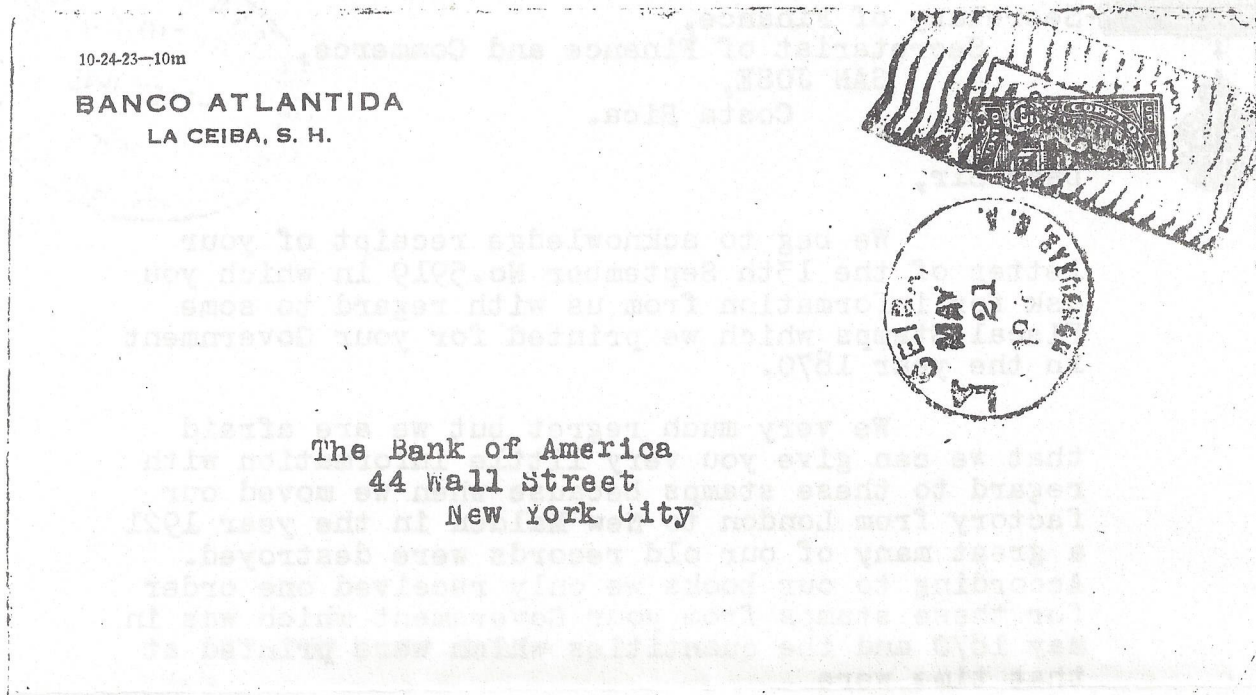
Yours faithfully,
BRADBURY, WILKINSON & CO. LTD.,

Director



ANOTHER BOGUS HONDURAN COVER?

Our illustration of a faked Honduran cover has prompted Mr JAV Rijn of Holland, a member of the Latin American Collectors Association of Holland, to write regarding a similar cover, which we illustrate here.



He writes:- "At home going through my collection of Honduras I came across a cover of roughly the same period with a vertically bi-sected stamp of 1919 (SG 202, Yvert 163, Scott 190) apparently sent from La Ceiba, a port on the northern coast of Honduras, to New York, The cancellation reads 'LA CEIBA-HOND' and is struck in red-violet. The circular datestamp for May 21st, does not clearly show the year. Since half of 15c is 7½c, and this value is not included in the 1919 issue, I tend to believe this was a 'made-up' cover by a collector, but on the other hand since both the sender and recipient are banks, it would suggest that this is a genuine business letter. "

If any of our readers would care to comment, I'm sure Mr van Rijn would be pleased to hear your views on his cover. He asks also if other bisected stamps are known used during this period? Was there perhaps a shortage of stamps at this time, and did a bisected 15c stamp represent a slight overpayment of the postage rate?

CONGRATULATIONS

My attention has been drawn to the Finlandia class of fiscal philately, tucked rather uncomplimentarily at the back of the Palmares booklet, and I would like to offer congratulations to the following members who received awards. Vermeil to Henry Madden (Ecuador) and James Andrews (Guatemala), Silver to Bill Welch (Colombia) and Bronze to Cornelius Spoelman (Schaumburg-Lippe). My apologies for this oversight.